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MUSICAL LANDMARKS IN NEW YORK

By CÉSAR SAERCHINGER¹

CONCERT-HALLS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

LONG before the demise of the old City Hotel the musical demands of the city had outgrown its limited accommodations. At first there were of course no concert-halls in the modern sense, built for the express purpose of musical entertainment. Use was made, therefore, of such auditoriums as existed for any purpose whatever. The largest of these were Castle Garden, already described, and the Broadway Tabernacle, situated from about 1830 on the east side of Broadway, between Worth Street and Catherine Lane.

This building was used for religious services on Sundays, but secular entertainments were admitted on week-days. The concerts of the Sacred Music Society, which were given there under that staunch pioneer of musical New York, U. C. Hill, furnished a compromise between the two orders. On June 25th, 1839, the first really important orchestral concert—in the modern sense—was given in this hall. This "Musical Solemnity," as it was called, derives additional importance from the fact that it gave the impulse for the formation of the Philharmonic Society, the oldest orchestral body in the United States and one of the oldest in the world. On this occasion, what was in all probability the first American performance of the "Freischütz" overture, took place and aroused the greatest enthusiasm. "One of those present," quoted in R. O. Mason's "Sketches," describes it thus:

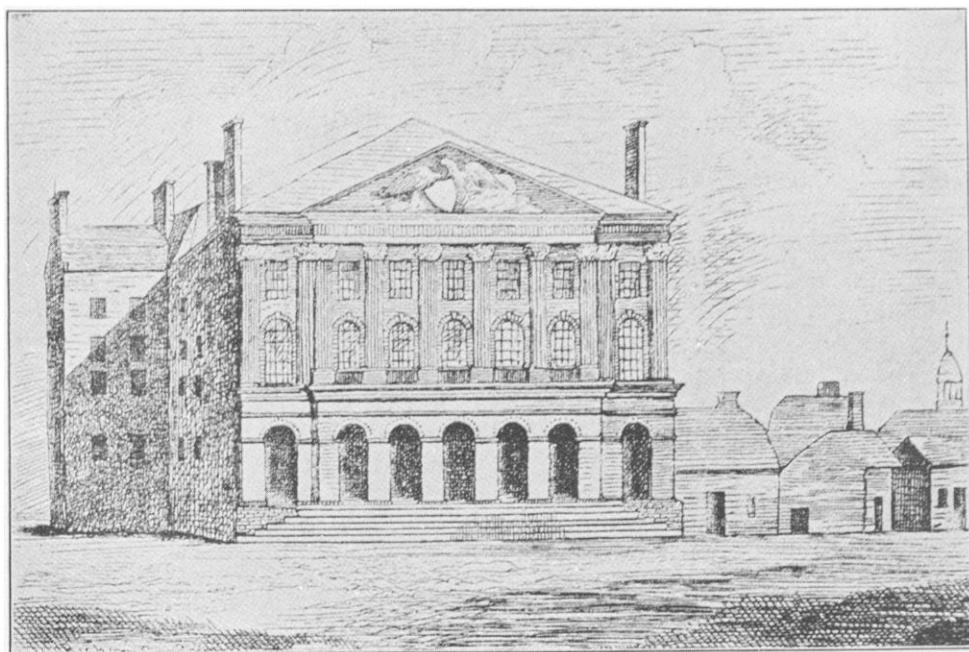
It produced a marvellous effect. At its close there was perfect silence for a few seconds, and then the building fairly shook with the applause of the great audience, and in answer to the continued demand the piece was repeated. No such orchestra had ever been heard in New York and no such effect ever before produced.

Several of the artists of international fame who about this time began to explore the American Eldorado used the Tabernacle for their concerts. Among these was Henri Herz, the pianistic Barnum, who writes most entertainingly in his "Voyages en Amérique." Speaking of the hall he says:

¹Continued from the January, 1920, number.



Park Theatre & Part of Park Row



Park Theatre Arcade
See the January, 1920, number

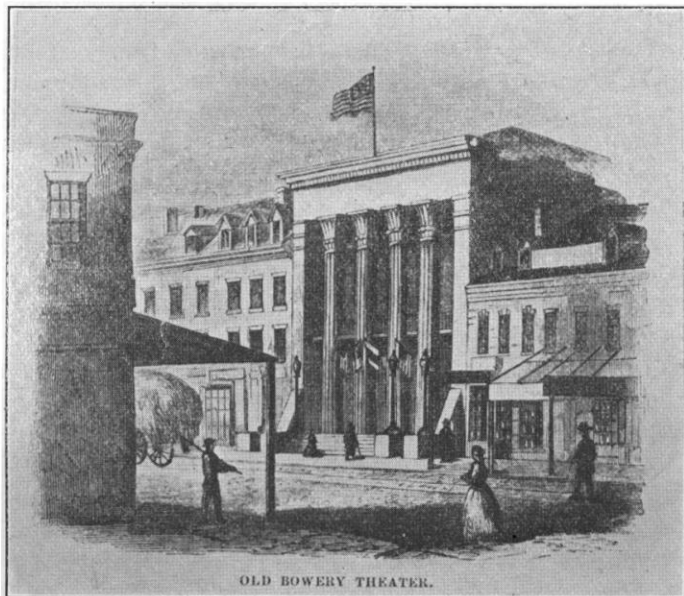
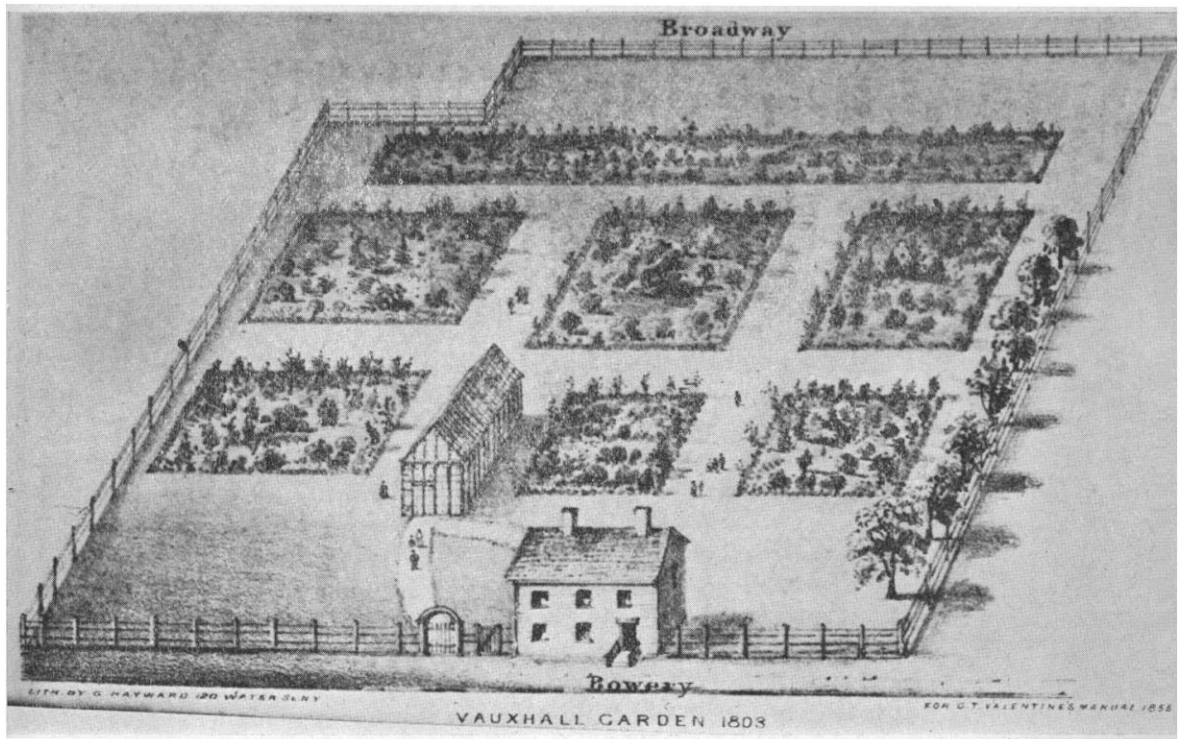
Though neither elegant nor well built according to the laws of acoustics, I preferred it because it was larger than the others and well known to the public.

The feature of the program was Herz's own Concerto in C. This was the very heyday of virtuoso bombast and piano "recitals" were unknown, of course. An orchestra was indispensable to a pianistic début, but on this occasion it seems to have cut very little figure, for, as Herz himself reports, the overture was played in the midst of the tumult of late-comers. The first solo in the Concerto after the opening *tutti* made such a furore that the audience would not allow the piece to go on before he had repeated it. At the end he had to make a speech, which was communicated to his hearers by an interpreter.

From this time on the Tabernacle was the leading concert-hall in the city. In 1847, according to the pianist Richard Hoffman, who also made his début there, it was the only room available besides Castle Garden, then being used for opera. In the season of 1847-48 Leopold de Meyer, the pianist from whom William Mason "learned the secrets of artistic piano playing," gave a series of concerts there. In 1853-54 the Philharmonic Society, till then playing in the Apollo Rooms, gave its concerts in the Tabernacle, and added to its historic glamor by performing (for the first time in America?) Beethoven's First and Schumann's Second symphonies.

The Apollo Rooms, just mentioned, were situated at No. 410-412 Broadway, just below Canal Street. The site is remarkable chiefly as the birthplace of the Philharmonic Society. On April 2nd, 1842, the organization meeting was held in these Rooms, and on December 7th of the same year the first concert was given in the same quarters. The most prominent place on the program was given to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, probably the first performance—certainly the first *good* performance—in America. Through nine seasons, from 1842 to 1848 and from 1849 to 1851, the Society gave its concerts in the Apollo Rooms. Perhaps the most notable of the many first American performances was that of the "Tannhäuser" overture in 1855, marking the beginning of Wagner's popularity in this country.

If the Apollo Rooms were the cradle of symphonic music in New York, the Coliseum Rooms, at 450 Broadway (above Canal Street), performed a similar service for choral music, for it saw the founding of the New York Harmonic Society on September 17th, 1849. The first concert of this forerunner of the present Oratorio Society took place here on May 10, 1850, and later, in the



See the January, 1920, number

course of the same year there was produced Handel's "Messiah," with Jenny Lind as one of the soloists.

Next in order is Niblo's Garden, already familiar as the last of New York's "gardens." Its career as a concert-hall, checkered as it was, and hovering always between the worthy and the shoddy, has nevertheless left a notable memory. It did not really figure in the concert-life of the city until after the original building (more remarkable for culinary than artistic excellence) burned down in 1846, was rebuilt, and re-opened four years later for both theatrical and musical purposes. During 1851-53 the Philharmonic gave its concerts here. Two notable American débuts—those of Henrietta Sontag and Sigismund Thalberg—took place at Niblo's, in 1853 and 1855 respectively; and later in 1855 Thalberg and Gottschalk were heard together in piano duets—surely a tremendous sensation in the days of virtuosity's triumph. An event of sentimental interest was the première of George F. Bristow's "Rip van Winkle," September 27th, 1855, the second American opera to achieve a performance and—for a long time to come the last.

Perhaps the most stimulating occurrence in Niblo's history was the coming, also in 1855, of the first German opera company, under the conductorship of Carl Bergmann. Weber's "Freischütz" and Lortzing's "Czar und Zimmermann" had performances—possibly the first in America,—and "Fidelio" its first, except for the earlier one in English at the Park Theatre. Bergmann's known ideals and ability assure us that these performances must have been at least tolerably in keeping with the quality of the works.

For a time Niblo's was one of the armed camps in the war between the classic operatic rivals of New York: Maretzek, Strakosch, Ullmann *et al.*, but these incidents hardly added to the artistic lustre of its reputation. The theatre burned down again and was rebuilt a second time in 1872. At all periods of its long history it was a favorite stamping ground for comic opera companies, and as late as 1890 Conried's German Opera Company enlivened its interior with such sparkling trifles as Strauss's "Zigeunerbaron" and Müller's "Hofnarr." In 1894 it closed its doors forever.

In the course of time the garden feature of Niblo's had been crowded out by the buildings that grew up around it. In its later years access to the old place from Broadway could be had only through the Metropolitan Hotel. Yet, as Max Maretzek wrote in 1855, it was still thought of as Niblo's Garden:

It was Niblo's Garden when loving couples ate their creams or drank their cobbles under the shade of the trees. It is Niblo's Garden now, when it is turned into a simple theatre and hedged in with houses.

And the playbills and programs still bore the tempting announcement of twenty minutes intermission "for a promenade in the garden," which according to the malicious Maretzek concealed a sly suggestion for liquid refreshment.

Affectionate indeed must be the memory in which old New Yorkers hold the place. In 1881 William Grant wrote of it as follows:

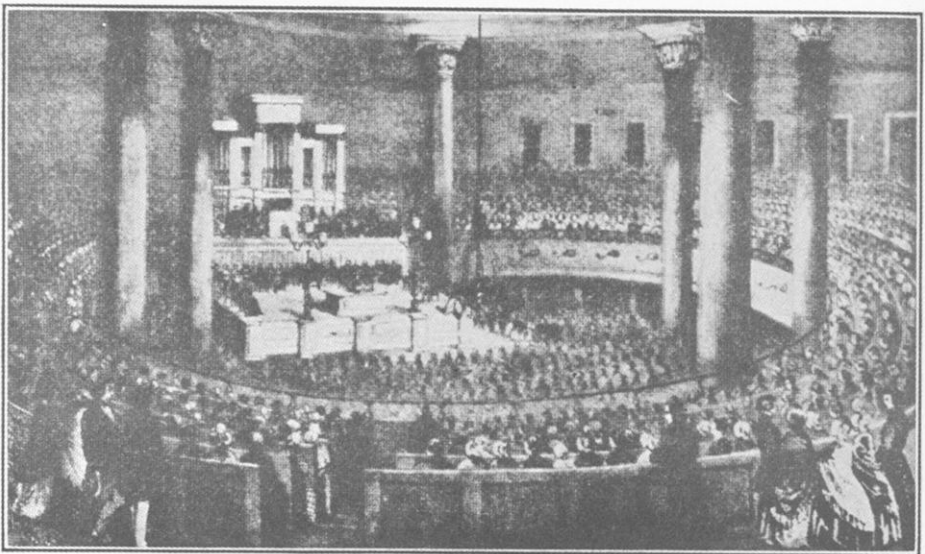
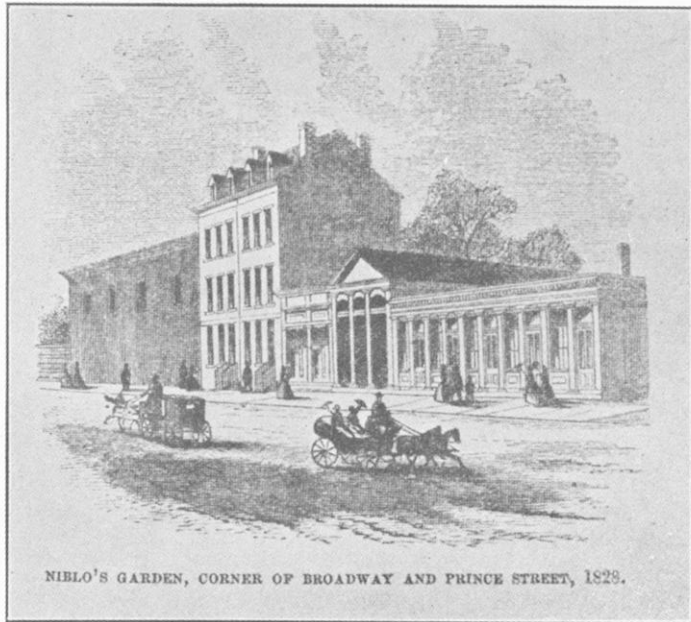
It was a great New York 'institution' in its day—perhaps the greatest and most beneficent one of its sort that New York has ever known. It may be safely said that most of the elder generation of New Yorkers now living have had at Niblo's Garden the greatest pleasure they have ever enjoyed in public. There were careless fun and easy jollity; there whole families would go at a moment's warning to hear this or that singer, but most of all, year after year, to see the Ravels, a family of pantomimists and dancers upon earth and air, who have given innocent, thoughtless, side-shaking, brain-clearing pleasure to more Americans than ever relaxed their sad silent faces for any other performers. The price of admission here was fifty cents, no seats reserved; 'first come, first served.'

TRIPLER HALL

The first hall to be built exclusively for concert purposes was Tripler Hall, later the Metropolitan Hall, on the present site of the Broadway Central Hotel at 677 Broadway, nearly opposite where Bond Street branches off. Here is hallowed ground for aspiring prima donnas. Intended for Jenny Lind's American début in 1850, it was not finished in time for the great event, which therefore took place in Castle Garden. It seated no less than 5,000 people. Its long and distinguished record began with a concert of the New York Harmonic Society on May 10th, 1850. In the same year seven-year old Patti made her début at a charity concert, being duly bribed by Max Maretzek with a hatful of candy. She sang the Rondo from "La Sonnambula" and the famous "Echo Song" which served Lind in keeping audiences spell-bound. According to her uncle, Strakosch, the child "produced an unheard-of sensation, and at once placed herself on a level with the celebrities at her side."¹

On January 28th, Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was heard at Tripler Hall for the first time in America. Jenny Lind's concerts there

¹Max Strakosch; *Souvenirs d'un Impresario*. Paris, 1887.



The Old Broadway Tabernacle, New York City

were the great sensation of the year 1851, and in 1852 this was nearly matched by those of Alboni, the greatest contralto of her time. Sontag sang here in September, 1852, less than two years before her tragic death in Mexico.

An event of peculiarly sentimental interest for American music-lovers was the first appearance of the boy Theodore Thomas as a violin virtuoso, Feb. 20, 1852, who introduced himself to the public upon which he was later to exert so potent an influence, with Ernst's "Otello" Fantaisie. At the same concert G. F. Bristow, the American composer, appeared as pianist. The Philharmonic Society of New York transferred its activities to Tripler Hall in 1853, and on this occasion produced Spohr's "The Seasons" for the first time in America. After a four years' blaze of glory the hall was destroyed by earthly flames, but promptly rose from its ashes in the shape of the Metropolitan Theatre, in which a number of musical events took place during the next decade.

New York was again without a proper concert-hall of size until the opening of Steinway Hall in 1866. In the meantime, however, another phase of indoor concert-life had got under way in New York, namely chamber music, and this found its first home in a smaller hall, Dodworth's, situated on Broadway, one door above Grace Church and opposite the opening of Eleventh Street. Here the Thomas-Mason Quintet, consisting of Theodore Thomas, Joseph Mosenthal, George Matzka and Carl Bergmann, with William Mason as pianist, gave its first concerts. Among the earliest "first timers" was the Brahms Trio, opus 8, given November 27, 1855.

STEINWAY HALL AND ITS GENERATION

In Steinway Hall, on Fourteenth Street, east of Fourth Avenue, in the building still occupied by the warerooms of Steinway & Sons, was focussed New York's concert-life through one of its most brilliant generations. For a quarter of a century it held the place that is now occupied by Carnegie Hall, and the lustre of the names inscribed on its records is not to be outshone by that of any artistic institution in America. With its neighbor, the Academy of Music, this building preserves the most precious musical memories of the last century.

The hall was opened in 1866 and at once became the home of the Philharmonic Society, which had been oscillating between Niblo's, the Academy and Irving Hall. At its first concert here

it inaugurated its record of presenting American compositions with G. F. Bristow's overture "Columbus." In 1867 it celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in the hall, and in a sense the beginning of its "adult" period, for under the exclusive leadership of Carl Bergmann, dating from 1866, it first reached a state of artistic maturity. The neo-romantics—then regarded as the moderns—now took their place with the great classics in the heart of New York's public, and Liszt, Wagner and Raff were as assiduously cultivated as Mozart and Beethoven. Theodore Thomas, the youngster who two years before—at the age of twenty-nine—had entered the concert field with his own orchestra, added to the brilliance of Steinway Hall as soon as it was opened. After the short reign of Leopold Damrosch (1876-77) the Philharmonic Society passed into his hands, and he gave a fitting *éclat* to his inauguration by first producing Brahms's great First Symphony. Thomas was already the chief educator of the musical public, and Steinway Hall was now his school house. In 1887 he inaugurated a feature of musical life which has survived to this day: the symphony *matinées* for young people, and at these concerts, as at those for grown-ups, there were many novelties, such as Dvořák's "Slavonic Dances" and Smetana's "Comedy Overture."

But the American composer was to have his hitherto greatest innings under Frank van der Stucken, who opened at Steinway Hall in 1885 a series of Sunday afternoon concerts. At the first of these he produced Dudley Buck's "Golden Legend."

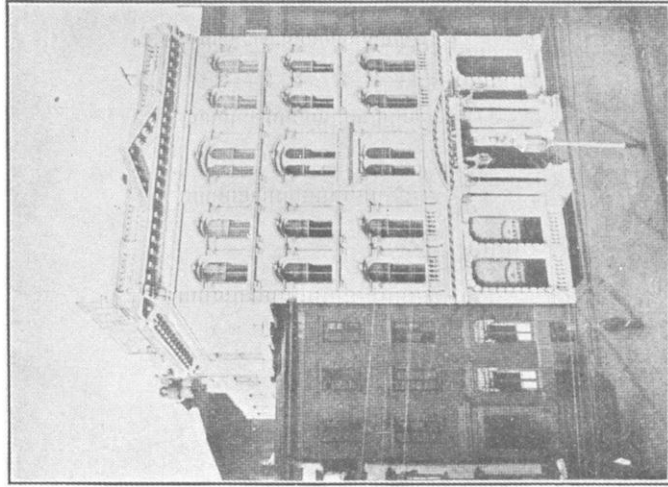
Chamber music first reached its present high estate in Steinway Hall, for the Kneisel Quartet began to give concerts there in 1887. In the same year the Boston Symphony Orchestra made its first bow to New York, under the leadership of Wilhelm Gericke, and Adolf Neuendorff also catered to the ever-growing appetite for orchestral music with a series of Sunday evening concerts. The Boston Symphony continued its visits to the last year of the hall's existence, when Arthur Nikisch set a new standard for orchestral conducting in America.

Merely to enumerate all the notable events in the life of Steinway Hall would fill pages. From the roster of artists who have appeared in it we select only the most famous for the following list:

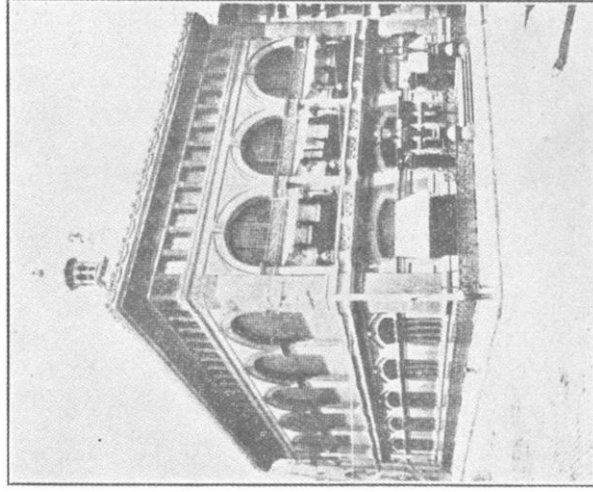
Pianists: Anton Rubinstein, Carreño, Rosenthal, d'Albert, Esipoff, Bülow, Joseffy and Mason.

Violinists: Wieniawski, Vieuxtemps, Ole Bull, Wilhelmj, Sarasate, Ovide Musin, Remenyi, Kreisler.

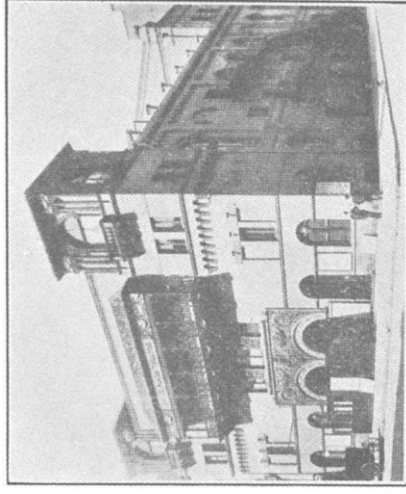
'Cellists: Gæetano Graga, Anton Hekking, Victor Herbert.



Steinway Hall,
East 14th St., New York



Chickering Hall, formerly at Eighteenth Street
and Fifth Avenue



Irving Place Theatre

Sopranos: Adelina Patti, Carlotta Patti, Parepa Rosa, Louisa Cappiani, Teresa Parodi, Marie Roze, Minnie Hauk, Lillian Nordica, Emma Juch, Gerster, Nilsson, Lilli Lehmann, Kellogg, Albani, Materna, Fursch-Madi, Sembrich.

Contraltos: Cary, Schalchi, Marianne Brandt, Anna Lankow.

Tenors: Brignoli, Italo Campanini, Niccolini, Anton Schott, Albert Niemann, Theodore Wachtel.

Baritones and Basses: Maurel, Tagliapetri, Georg Henschel, Carl Formes, Ronconi.

Steinway Hall closed its doors on May 2nd, 1890, to give its owners additional wareroom space for their pianos. Two years later its place was taken by the larger Carnegie Hall further uptown. During its earlier years its only contemporary was Irving Hall, the present Irving Place Theatre, at the corner of Fifteenth Street and Irving Place, which rounded out the musical center formed by its grander neighbors. Here the Philharmonic Society gave its concerts for two seasons, from 1861 to 1863, and here Theodore Thomas began his activities as a conductor. At his first concert, December 3rd, 1864, he led his orchestra through Beethoven's Eighth and Berlioz's "Romeo and Juliet" Symphony, and accompanied S. B. Mills in Chopin's F-minor Concerto. Many minor musical events took place in Irving Hall, until in 1890 it became the Amberg Theatre, and a home for German plays and operas of the lighter genre. Even during its subsequent career, as the Irving Place Theatre, managed by Heinrich Conried, it was still addicted to music of this sort. In our own day, Otto Goritz, a "war refugee" from the Metropolitan Opera House, has given a short season of German operetta there. The picturesque exterior of the building still retains an aspect of old romance.

In its later years Steinway Hall had two younger rivals: Chickering Hall and Knabe Hall. The former was built by Charles F. Chickering, the piano manufacturer, and stood till recently at the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Eighteenth Street, and the latter still exists as the assembly hall of the Methodist Building, at the corresponding corner of Twentieth Street. Neither was as large as Steinway, and only Chickering was at all suitable for symphonic concerts. It was inaugurated in 1875 by Hans von Bülow, who wrote about it in his letters. The one to his mother, dated Nov. 15, 1875, is most characteristic:¹

I have just come from the brilliant music hall which has been worthily dedicated in every respect. My eighteenth concert in America, and my first in New York, was *tout simplement* the most colossal success

¹Hans von Bülow: Briefe, vol. 6 (1908).

of my career as virtuoso, and, as my excellent manager says, the greatest triumph which he has experienced in twenty years. . .

My old friend Damrosch has stood the test most brilliantly and he conducted admirably. . .

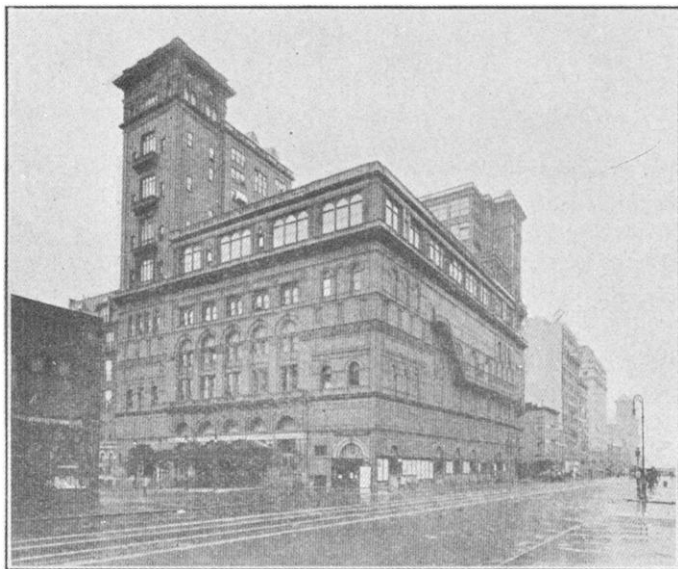
In every respect civilization here has arrived at such a state that I find Europe more than a half-century behind, and steeped in mediæval barbarity. Wonderful country—excellent people!

He signs himself "Hans im Glück (zur Abwechslung)." ["Lucky John (for a change)"].

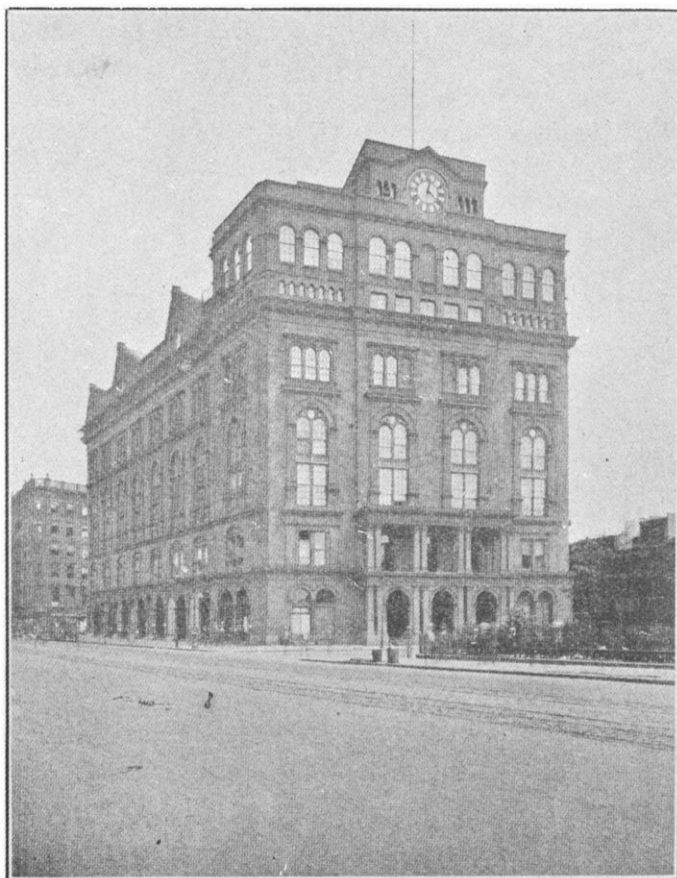
Chickering Hall has been much identified with the production of new works, and especially those of American composers, for here Frank van der Stucken continued his series of novelty concerts in 1886. In that year he produced J. K. Paine's "The Nativity" (in part) and Edward MacDowell's "Ophelia." Edgar Stillman Kelley's "Macbeth" music followed in 1887, and during the following season (1887-88) there was a group of five "American" concerts, the programs of which comprised performances—in most cases the first—of Paine's "Spring" Symphony, MacDowell's symphonic poem "Hamlet," Foote's overture "In the Mountains," G. T. Strong's Symphony in F, besides cantatas by Parker ("King Trojan") and Buck ("Voyage of Columbus"), Huss's Rhapsody for piano and orchestra, Whiting's Piano Concerto and other works by William Mason, W. W. Gilchrist, W. G. Smith, G. W. Chadwick, etc.—altogether a record of pioneer work rarely approached in this country.

Following out these traditions of Chickering Hall, Edward MacDowell chose it for his New York début on March 5, 1889, giving the first public performance anywhere of his Second Concerto, under Theodore Thomas. Two years later he played his "Sonata Tragica" at a Kneisel Quartet concert in the same place.

Non-American novelties brought out at Chickering Hall include Berlioz's "The Trojans at Carthage," produced as a dramatic cantata by van der Stucken, February 26th, 1887, Wagner's Symphony in C, and Bruckner's Fourth, played at a Seidl concert, in 1888, Brahms's Double Concerto, op. 102, and the same composer's Trio, opus 101, under Thomas, who also produced scenes from Saint-Saëns's "Samson and Dalila." A number of the great artists heard at Steinway Hall appeared at Chickering as well, and besides there are exquisite recollections of joint recitals by Mr. and Mrs. Georg Henschel, and recitals by Vladimir de Pachmann. Among choral societies, the Rubinstein Club began its career in this hall, and both the Orpheus Glee Club and the New York Vocal Union (which are no more) gave their concerts here.



Carnegie Hall



Cooper Institute

CARNEGIE HALL AND ITS CONTEMPORARIES

The great concert-hall which was built by Andrew Carnegie and which is still one of the striking features of the city, was opened on May 5th, 1891, a year—almost to the day—after the closing of Steinway Hall, whose activities and standing it inherited. In dignity and in wealth of its associations it surpasses, despite its comparative youth, most of the landmarks, past and present, of musical New York. Its very opening was an event forever to be remembered, for the guest of honor of the occasion was no less a person than Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky, whose only visit to America caused such a flurry of enthusiasm among the people and such depression in the soul of the homesick composer, with his almost morbid distaste for public demonstrations. In his "Diary of my Trip Abroad" he records his impressions of New York and his disgust with the prying reporters who dished up to a curious public details of his personal appearance and manners—matters of private concern—as though he were a curiosity or a visitor from another planet. He simply could not comprehend our love for "human interest stuff."

At this dedicatory concert Tchaikovsky conducted his "Marche solennelle" and of course carried away the chief honors of the evening.¹ (He went home "convinced that he was ten times more famous in America than in Europe.") His own account, as it appears in his diary, is worth quoting:

The appearance of the hall in the evening, lit up and crowded with people, was very fine and effective. The ceremony began with a speech by Reno (this had caused the poor fellow much perturbation all the day before). After this the National Anthem was sung. Then a clergyman² made a very long and wearisome speech, in which he eulogized the founders of the hall, especially Carnegie. The "Leonore" Symphony (sic) was then beautifully rendered. Interval. I went downstairs. Great excitement. I appeared, and was greeted with loud applause. The March went splendidly. Great success. I sat in Hyde's box for the rest of the concert. Berlioz *Te Deum* is somewhat wearisome; only toward the end I began to enjoy it thoroughly. Reno carried me off with him. An improvised supper. I slept like a log.

The next distinguished composer to visit Carnegie Hall was Antonin Dvořák, who arrived in America the following autumn. In October a "Grand Concert" in honor of—or, to be honest, to advertise—his coming, was held in the Hall. Dvořák conducted

¹Walter Damrosch conducted the rest of the program and Italo Campanini sang in Berlioz's Requiem.

²Bishop Potter

an overture especially written for the occasion. Perhaps the less said about the occasion the better. Much more important from the musical point of view was the world-première of the "New World" Symphony, which took place in the hall the following year.

Of subsequent historic occasions the first American appearance of Saint-Saëns, the visit of Richard Strauss, and Mahler's incumbency of the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society stand out in the career of Carnegie Hall thus far. The first of these came in 1906, when the French composer played three of his own compositions with the New York Symphony Orchestra. The Strauss episode is still fresh in the minds of concert-goers. The composer of "Salome" and "Elektra" conducted virtually all his symphonic works with the Wetzler Symphony Orchestra, in the course of a "Strauss Festival" in February and March, 1904. Mahler's activities in Carnegie Hall were attended by circumstances not altogether creditable to New York, for his difficulties with the management of the Philharmonic Society are said to have been of such a character as to aggravate the sickness to which he finally succumbed. However, his artistic achievements were altogether memorable, and it is not likely that the hall will live to see a greater spirit preside at its esthetic feasts. To hear a Bach suite played by a superbly trained organization in the authentic manner, with a Mahler at the harpsichord, or to listen to a Mozart symphony or a Wagner excerpt performed under his bâton, not to speak of his own works played as they will probably never be heard again—these are things that the thousands of privileged music lovers of New York will not soon forget. Mahler's term lasted from the spring of 1909 to the spring of 1911. It was his last artistic effort, for he died soon after his return to Europe.

Other great conductors who have led the Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall (its home ever since it was built) are Édouard Colonne, Wassili Safonoff, Sir Henry Wood, Willem Mengelberg, Fritz Steinbach, Richard Strauss and Felix Weingartner. The Boston Symphony Orchestra, in the same period, has given annual series of concerts which as feasts of tonal beauty were perhaps not surpassed anywhere in the world. Its conductors were Nikisch, Emil Paur, Wilhelm Gericke, Max Fiedler, Karl Muck and more recently Henri Rabaud. As for the great soloists who have delighted audiences in this hall, their name is legion. Let us only recall such giants as Paderewski, Teresa Carreño, Xaver Scharwenka, Josef Hofmann, Marsick, Ondříček, Carl Halir and Fritz Kreisler.

Of Carnegie Hall's contemporaries only the late lamented Mendelssohn Hall requires mention. This most beautiful of New York's auditoriums, situated on the North side of Fortieth Street between Sixth Avenue and Broadway, was the home of the Mendelssohn Glee Club, from about 1900, but served ideally for chamber music concerts and recitals. The Kneisel Quartet, the most eminent pianists, violinists and lieder-singers all gave their concerts here in the nineties. In 1896-98 Edward MacDowell had his headquarters there as conductor of the Mendelssohn Glee Club, and his predecessor was Joseph Mosenthal.

In 1911 the building was torn down to make way for the large office building bearing No. 119. The concert-hall did not "pay," because it was a concert-hall and nothing more. New York is too rich a city to be able to afford land for such unproductive purposes. The gap left by its destruction is now filled by Æolian Hall in Forty-second Street, which is the youngest musical "landmark" in New York, but is rapidly making history. It occupies the ground on which formerly stood the Forty-second Street Presbyterian Church, which also had a record for good music.

MUSIC FOR THE MASSES

Alongside the development of a regular concert-life there have been sporadic movements for the purpose of giving good music to the "masses." Men like Theodore Thomas realized that a healthy musical development could not rest on "society," but must be rooted in the people's love of music, and he, more than anyone else in American musical history, labored for the musical education of the great mass of the people. The secret of success in such an undertaking lies primarily in the personality of the conductor, but two all-important factors are the choice of a place and the make-up of the programs. Thomas secured the first by reviving the out-door feature of New York's early musical history, and the second by the addition of lighter elements to the prevailing classical fare and the cultivation of Wagner's music, then still new but quickly appreciated by the un-academic audiences to which he catered.

All the places in which he did his great educational work are still visible. The first is Terrace Garden, extending from Fifty-ninth Street through to Fifty-eighth, near Lexington Avenue. This was a combination of amusement hall and summer garden, where citizens ate, and drank their beer in German style. Here Thomas, in the summer of 1866, began his nightly concerts with a symphony

orchestra, which played in an enclosure, while the audience were seated under the trees. The success of these concerts was immense. They were repeated in 1867 and lasted from June to September. How Thomas threw himself heart and soul into this work and how he himself enjoyed it may be read out of the pages of his diary, where he records also some humorous incidents.¹ One of them reveals the streak of charlatanism in Thomas which, high-minded musician though he was, probably helped him to success. While playing the "Linnet Polka" he got the piccolo players to climb up into the trees. When the audience suddenly heard the burst of artistic warbling from above it was, of course, "tickled to death," as was Thomas over the sensation he had produced. In the "Carnival of Venice" he sent the tuba player into the shrubbery, back of the audience. When he began to play the police mistook him for a practical joker who was disturbing the music, and tried to arrest him! "I shall never forget the comical scene," says Thomas, "as the poor man fled toward the stage, pursued by the irate policeman and trying to get in a note here and there as he ran."

In 1868 Thomas needed larger quarters, and the Central Park Garden, on Seventh Avenue, between Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets, was built for him. The remains of this popular resort is now the Central Park Riding Academy, which plainly bears evidence of having seen better days. The Thomas Sunday Night concerts here began on May 25th, 1868; in the following year 134 consecutive concerts were given; in 1870 the orchestra was increased to sixty, and in 1872, on September 17th, the first all-Wagner concert to be given in New York took place at the garden. On this occasion the "Valkyries' Ride" was played from manuscript, for the first time in America, and the enthusiasm knew no bounds. People jumped on chairs and shouted with joy. On the same evening a Richard Wagner Union was founded, and this raised a fund to buy tickets for the members of the orchestra to visit Bayreuth.

The concerts in the Central Park Garden continued till September 16, 1875, when Thomas was forced to discontinue them on account of competition along still more "popular" lines. Thereafter Central Park Garden was devoted to less worthy purposes. But it is safe to say that few places were ever so dear to the hearts of truly music-loving people.

The third and last great center of popular music is Madison Square Garden, which has witnessed some of the most

¹Theodore Thomas, edited by George P. Upton, vol. i, p. 54.

Gargantuan manifestations of it. Its history may be recounted briefly.

About 1870 the abandoned passenger station of the New York Central and Hudson River railroad was turned into an amusement palace. Soon after it became the scene of the activities of that formidable music-maker, Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, and for years was known as Gilmore's Garden. Gilmore was the sublimation of the bandmasterdom of his day. During the Civil War he was "bandmaster-general" and upon its close perpetrated a number of musical orgies that must have satisfied the current craze for superlatives. At the international peace jubilee of 1872, held in Boston, he "conducted" an orchestra of 3,000, a chorus of 20,000, for an audience of 100,000, and received a gift of \$50,000 from the grateful citizens. The next year, as bandmaster of the 22nd Regiment in New York, he began a series of 600 concerts in Madison Square Garden, and kept up his Herculean efforts on behalf of mass music for many years. He brought the Garde Républicaine band from Paris, Johann Strauss from Vienna, and Franz Abt from Germany.

But the old Garden became the real center of music for the people when Theodore Thomas gave his famous summer-night concerts there in 1878. From May till September this astute artist-educator gave the people that healthful mixture of classics and good popular favorites, which meant cultivation and true enjoyment. On the hundredth anniversary of Washington's inauguration in 1889, Thomas, taking a leaf out of Gilmore's book, gave a monster concert with orchestra and chorus of 2,000. The musical appetite of that day seems to have been enormous, for both Gilmore and Thomas flourished for some time together. In the *Musical Courier* of July 15th, 1891, we still read of "Theodore Thomas at Madison Square Garden giving his old programs nightly. . . . Then Gilmore fills the popular maw with the pabulum it craves."

The new Madison Square Garden—the present building—is replete with musical memories of the more popular and sensational sort. It was opened on January 16th, 1890, by Eduard Strauss from Vienna, with his orchestra and two "grand ballets;" with an audience of 17,000 present. Two years later Adelina Patti assisted by other soloists, a chorus of 1000 and an orchestra, churned the people's frenzy to wild hysteria. The sequels to these festivals of sound are still remembered by the public of today: from J. S. Duss and his freakish wave of popularity down to the Civic Orchestra under Walter Henry Rothwell, of much higher quality but, alas, much smaller success.

In former days the Twenty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue corner of the Garden was a smaller concert-hall, seating 1100 people, and though of short existence it has distinguished occasions to its credit. Both Edward MacDowell and Ethelbert Nevin gave concerts here, in 1895 and 1897 respectively. And earlier, in 1893, one of the most notable concerts of American compositions—the sequel of a prize competition of the National Conservatory of Music—took place. Henry Schoenefeld, Frederick Field Bullard and Horatio Parker supplied the principal items of the program. The judges of the contest included Dvořák, Asger Hamerik and Xaver Scharwenka—all then teaching in this country,—besides Buck, Paine and Joseffy.

Another landmark of popular music is the site of the Broadway Theatre, between Fortieth and Forty-first Street. It was occupied from 1880 by the Metropolitan Concert-Hall. This was the brain-child of Rudolf Aronson, a survivor of the Barnum school of musical managers. Aronson, himself a conductor, gave 150 concerts there, and was succeeded by Theodore Thomas himself. The hall held 2000 persons. In its present form, as the Broadway Theatre, it has achieved a more important musical record still. Besides the Theodore Thomas popular concerts it witnessed a great series of Beethoven recitals by Hans von Bülow in April, 1889, and other recitals by Bülow and various distinguished artists. Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado" was the opening piece of the theatre in 1888.

Before leaving this topic one should take a glance at the venerable Cooper Union Institute, at Astor Place and Fourth Avenue. This forum of the people, where Lincoln made one of his memorable addresses, has in music as in other things remained true to its democratic principle. For years such organizations as the People's Choral Union and the People's Symphony Concerts have had their headquarters there, and thousands have thus enjoyed the beauties of good music with a zest surpassed nowhere else.

IV

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GREAT MUSICIANS

Compared with European capitals, New York is, in the very nature of things, poor in places of pilgrimage, such as birthplaces or homes of great musicians. But such being the case, let us cherish what little we have. All things are relative, and the birthplace of a MacDowell should be as dear to New York as

that of Wagner is to Leipzig. And if our cities grow and change so rapidly that birthplaces do not even live to see their issues grow great, then we shall have to be content with commemorating the sites.

That, indeed, is all we can do in the case of Edward MacDowell. He was born at No. 220 Clinton Street, in the midst of what was in 1861 an old residential neighborhood, bounded on the south by the East River, on the north by Division Street (which runs in an easterly direction from the Bowery to a juncture with Grand Street). The house stood just south of the corner of Madison Street, within three short blocks of the water-front, where young MacDowell and his playmates have spent many an hour of their boyhood days, watching the shipping, admiring the tall masts and the rigging of the vessels at the docks. There is nothing more stimulating to the imagination than the atmosphere of seafaring; and who, having sensed the smack of brine and tar in such pieces as the "Song" and "A. D. MDCXX" can doubt that they have their origin in the earliest impressions of youth?

The neighborhood is now entirely built over by a modern Ghetto—tenements and shops,—with a dense population finding breathing space in Rutgers Square with its playgrounds near by. A tablet on the building which now houses a leather merchant, a dry-cleaner and many Jewish families might seem out of place, but its significance could hardly escape the thousands of real music lovers residing in that corner of the great East Side.

MacDowell left New York when he was fifteen, after having studied piano playing with two local teachers and for a little while with the great Teresa Carreño. Even while in the Clinton Street house he had tried his hand at composition, as he had at drawing and verse-making. He was taken to Paris to study, then to Germany, and did not return to his native city to live until his thirty-sixth year, having in the meantime held a professorship in Darmstadt, having been honored by Liszt and having gained wide recognition as a composer in Europe. His home-coming then should have been in the nature of a triumph, were it not for the perennial truth of the proverb about the prophet in his own country. After teaching a few years in Boston and having at length produced his piano concertos in New York, London and Boston, having given a concert of his works in Madison Square Concert-Hall, as already recorded, and having had his "Indian Suite" and Concerto produced by the Boston Symphony in the Metropolitan Opera House on January 23rd, 1896, he was made

professor of music at Columbia University, and accordingly settled in New York. He and his wife lived, during this period, in apartments, successively at the northwest corner of West End Avenue and Eighty-eighth Street, at Ninety-sixth Street, one door from the corner of Central Park West, and finally on the East side of Seventh Avenue, between Fifty-seventh and Fifty-eighth Streets, in a building now torn down. His sabbatical vacation of 1902-3 he spent in Europe, after which the MacDowells lived for a year at the old Westminster Hotel, at Sixteenth Street and Irving Place. They returned to it shortly before his death. There he died January 24th, 1908, and the funeral services were held in St. George's Church nearby. His body was removed to Peterborough, N. H., and interred "within the sight of his neighbors."

It is difficult to say what compositions, if any, were written in these various places of abode, as MacDowell did most of his creative work during the summer, in his log cabin at Peterborough. His real scene of activity in New York was the music department of Columbia University, then located on the top floor of the School of Mines, the building backing up against Broadway, just above 116th Street. Here he labored many—too many—hours each week with a large class of students, and that he gave them of his best is attested by a number of American composers who served their apprenticeship there. Here the "weary, tired, though interested face" could be seen hour after hour, at "the patient trying-over and annotating," until his nervous vitality could no longer stand the strain.¹ A pleasant and illuminating light is thrown on MacDowell's activities here by a member of his class, whose description of a final examination is quoted in Mr. Gilman's monograph:

In a pedagogical sense it was not a regular examination. There was something beautifully human in the way the professor turned the traditional stiff and starched catechism into a delightful informal chat, in which the faburden, the Netherland School, early notation, the great clavichord players, suites and sonatas, formed the main topics. The questions were put in such an easy, charming way that I forgot to be frightened; forgot everything but the man who walked rapidly about the room with his hands in his pockets and his head tipped slightly to one side; who talked animatedly and looked intently at the floor. But the explanations and suggestions were meant for me. When I tripped upon the beginning of notation for instruments he looked up quickly and said: 'Better look that up again, that's important.'

¹Lawrence Gilman: Edward MacDowell (1908).

It is well known that MacDowell was somewhat awkward and shy in his manner, and an amusing anecdote is told of a cruel exploitation of this trait by some girl students. After a lecture they walked up to the composer and gushed: "Oh, professor, we *do* love 'Thy Beaming Eyes!'" The professor's confusion no doubt gave full satisfaction to his assailants.

Columbia University owes our foremost composer a debt of gratitude, and, it is said, reparation. Thus far it has done nothing to register its appreciation of the genius who labored in behalf of American art.

STEPHEN FOSTER

About the time that MacDowell was born in Clinton Street, Stephen Foster, America's great writer of folk-songs, came to the city to seek his fortune—alas, a bitter one. This was in 1860. Some years before, while in Pittsburgh, he had received an offer from E. P. Christy, of the famous Minstrels, to write a song for him, and had received the munificent sum of \$500.¹ The song was "Old Folks at Home," and, since Christy's Minstrels were then performing at Mechanics' Hall, at 472 Broadway, this most beautiful of all American folk-songs must have had its first public hearing there. It soon figured as encore on the programs of Jenny Lind and Christine Nilsson and netted its composer hundreds in royalties.

Now, in 1860, he had again received a profitable offer from New York, this time from the publishing firm of Firth, Pond & Co., then located at 547 Broadway, near Prince Street. Beyond the certainty that he frequented this office, haunted it in fact, if we are to believe the popular accounts (he would write song after song under the pressure of absolute need, get his money and promptly spend it—a good deal of it in drink) we cannot be certain of his movements. Indeed it is not likely that anyone knew his whereabouts most of the time. Poor Foster was a wayward genius whose temperament had gotten the best of him, and

¹Fabulous as it may seem, this is the sum given by Morrison Foster, the composer's brother, in his biographical introduction to *Foster's Songs* (pub. 1896). He claims to have drawn up the agreement stipulating that amount as remuneration for the right of performance before publication, and says Christy sent it back "duly signed" *C. S.* —Morrison Foster's statement appears to be completely at variance with the foot-note which Stephen C. Foster added to his manuscript computation of royalties received until January 27, 1857 (now in the Library of Congress). He says: "In the amts. recd. I have included \$15 on each of the two songs 'Old Folks' and 'Farewell Lilly' from E. P. Christy."—*Ed.*

dissolution set in soon after he came to New York.¹ With his songs famous all over the land, the composer was a penniless wanderer on Broadway and the Bowery. All we do know,—and this is based on the testimony of his brother, is that in January, 1864, he was living at the American Hotel, which according to the directory for that year was at the north-west corner of Broadway and Eighth Street, and while there was taken with fever and ague. After two or three days he arose, and while washing himself he fainted and fell across the washbasin, which broke and cut a gash in his neck and face. He lay there insensible and bleeding until discovered by the chambermaid. On recovering his senses he asked to be taken to a hospital, and accordingly was taken to Bellevue, at Twenty-seventh Street and the East River. He was so weakened by fever and loss of blood that he did not rally. On the 13th he died, "peacefully and quietly." His remains were, under the supervision of his publisher, Pond, removed to Pittsburgh, where he lies buried near his father, and the mother for whom he cherished a touching, child-like love to the end.

GOTTSCHALK AND THE MASONS

Of the other American composers of the past who have trodden the streets of New York, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, Lowell and William Mason, and Ethelbert Nevin are probably the most distinguished. Let us take them in order.

Gottschalk was born in New Orleans of Jewish parents, reared in Creole surroundings, studied in Paris and spent most of his early life abroad, where he was a leading concert favorite for years. His "Last Hope" and "Printemps d'Amour" were in the "Maiden's Prayer" class of popularity, and when he came to New York he was more likely regarded as a distinguished foreigner than a native American. Nevertheless his inspiration, such as it was, was rooted to some extent in the American soil, and in a sense he was our first nationalist composer.

Gottschalk undertook his first American concert tour in 1853 (he was born in 1829), and his first New York appearance

¹His wife had left him some years before, and we are forced to the conclusion that his artistic temperament, with all that goes with it, was too much for her. It should be stated that after his marriage, in 1849, Foster had started in housekeeping in New York, though the directories do not record his address. But his brother, Morrison Foster, tells us in his "Biography" that homesickness and love for his mother drove the composer back to Pittsburgh. "One day," says the brother, "he suddenly proposed to his wife that they return to Pittsburgh. He brought a dealer to the house, sold out everything in the way of furniture, and within twenty-four hours was on the road to the home of his father . . ." Our authority does not mention how the young wife took to the "proposal," nor what became of her afterward.

was at Niblo's "Saloon" on Friday, February 11th. The furore he aroused was almost comparable to that caused by Jenny Lind, a little more than two years before. The flutter he excited in the hearts of romantic damsels is reflected in the sentimental account of Octavia Hensel, later his pupil.¹

How well that night is recalled? (she begins). In childlike wonder a young girl (meaning herself) had gazed at the strange name, 'Gottschalk' on the posters on either side the entrance of Niblo's, as she passed through Broadway in the afternoon.

After telling the details of her preparation for the event and describing the audience of richly dressed and beautiful women, the low hum of excitement, the expectant glances toward the stage, etc., etc., she continues:

At last the hum of voices was drowned in a burst of applause that greeted the entrance of the artist. There he stood, gracefully inclining toward his audience, one hand resting on the corner of the piano, the other pressed to his breast . . . At last he seated himself at the piano, and drew off his gloves (!), for a moment his delicate, slender hands were half clasped or folded together, and then they were poised for an instant over the keys.

A magnetic thrill flashed over the audience as lightning-like arpeggios blended harmonies so full of languor and luxuriance. . . She cannot recall all of the program: she only remembers the magnetic power of the music, the dreamful beauty of his eyes and the softly outlined melancholy of his face.

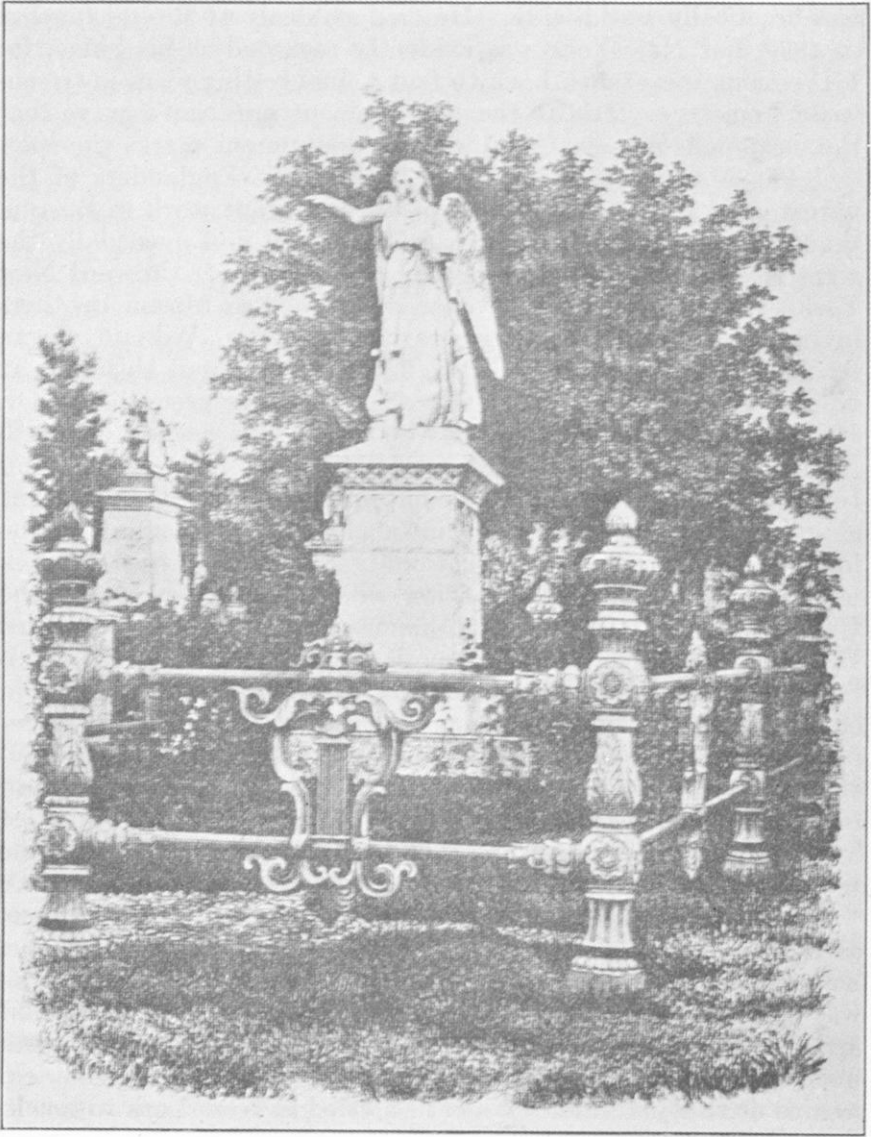
Can we doubt what the "young girl" answered when her father asked her whether she would study with Thalberg or Gottschalk? Thereafter Gottschalk was the rage in New York, which "enthroned him the king of pianists." He returned to the city after some further touring in 1855, and in the late fifties spent considerable time here between trips to other cities, the West Indies, etc. During this time he lived at No. 149 East Ninth Street. No doubt he did some composing, and at any rate prepared a new edition of the hyper-popular "Last Hope" there. William Mason in his "Recollections" tells of meeting the great *matinée* idol one day at the music store of William Hall & Sons at 239 Broadway (Park Place), a favorite rendezvous of musicians. Gottschalk was scanning a proof of a title-page just received from the printer. He showed it to Mason who saw, in large letters across the top, "The Latest Hops." Puzzled, he asked what it meant. "Well," said Gottschalk, "it's the title-page of the new edition of my 'Last Hope.'" The printer was either a dunce or a humorist.

¹Life and Letters of Louis Moreau Gottschalk. Boston, 1870.

Gottschalk shook the dust of New York for the last time in 1864, when he went to South America, to repeat the phenomenal success gained in the United States and in Europe. His vogue was practically world-wide. He died suddenly at Rio de Janeiro, in 1869, but New York was evidently regarded as his home, for his remains were taken back to find a final resting place in Greenwood Cemetery. His is the only eminent musician's grave that the metropolis possesses, and a fitting monument marks the spot.

The Masons, father and son, were New Englanders of the purest stock. Lowell did most of his important work in Boston, though of course its significance was national, but eventually the great reformer of American church music gravitated toward New York, where two of his sons were established as Mason Brothers in the book business, and where his third son, William, began teaching the piano in 1855. Dr. Mason lived about this time at No. 56 West Eighteenth Street, and he acted as precentor in Dr. James Alexander's Church, at the Northeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Nineteenth Street. At that time most of his hymn tunes had been written and had come into general use in Protestant churches, and his name was known all over the country as the founder of the "musical convention." His distinguished services in the cause of musical education were duly recognized by the University of New York, which honored him with the first Mus. Doc. degree ever conferred in America. We can imagine the dignified little man, with his tight-lipped, stubborn puritan face, in choker and black tie, with a shock of white hair under the stove-pipe hat, walking down to Washington Square for the ceremony. He had trod the honest path, the best according to his lights, and the world had rewarded him amply. One of his collections of hymn tunes alone brought him \$100,000 in royalties. He was able to retire to an estate at East Orange, and he died there in 1872.

His son, William, was of another kidney. Gifted as virtuoso, as well as pedagogue, having studied in Leipzig and Prague, hobnobbed with Liszt at Weimar and played before courts, he was a real cosmopolitan, a man of the world as well as a solid artist, a musician of fine taste and broad sympathy, an all-round man such as New York, as the artistic gateway of America, needed at this juncture. When he settled in New York to teach, Gottschalk and Thalberg, Ole Bull, Grisi and Mario, held the city by its ears, virtuosodom was supreme, the Philharmonic Society was still weak in artistic influence. Mason at once gathered about him a nucleus of the best and most serious artists, Bergmann and Thomas among them, and started the first soirées of



Grave of Louis Moreau Gottschalk

chamber music in Dodworth's Academy (on Broadway, opposite Eleventh Street). They lasted till 1868—over twelve years—and gave the impulse to one of the noblest features of our concert-life. Schumann and Brahms owe their appreciation in America largely to Mason. In place of the "grand vocal and instrumental concert" which was the style of thing affected even by the above-mentioned virtuosi, he introduced, moreover, the modern piano recital, as Liszt did in Europe. When great artists like Rubinstein came to America, Mason was their host, and his studio in Steinway Hall was the gathering place of the musical élite.

In May, 1873, Thomas arranged a great musical festival, at which Rubinstein was the central figure. William Mason and Sebastian Bach Mills, the Anglo-American pianist, joined him in playing the great Bach Triple Concerto. Mason recounts a characteristic incident¹ of the rehearsals. Realizing the necessity of unanimity in the manner of executing the *Manieren*, he pointed out to Rubinstein the interpretation of an old authority on the subject, Marpurg, and produced Marpurg's work in evidence. Rubinstein brushed it aside without further ado, saying "All wrong. This is the way I do it!" or words to that effect. And so it was done! At the stage entrance of Steinway Hall, Rubinstein was besieged with requests for autographs, and once Mason, undertaking to procure one for a young female admirer, had the pleasure of seeing the virtuoso calmly throw the young lady's paper out of the window—minus the autograph. On the whole, as is well known, Rubinstein regarded his stay in America as a nightmare, and was loud in his criticism of our ways even while here. His writing a set of variations on "Yankee Doodle" for Mason was obviously a purely personal compliment.²

Mason lived for many years at No. 14 West 16th Street, on the site which is now occupied by a 5 and 10 cent store. Here many distinguished artists foregathered. As late as 1901 Ernst von Dohnányi dined there, and played his symphony on Dr. Mason's piano. In 1908, at seventy-nine the genial host passed away.

NEVIN

Nevin arrived in New York in October, 1897, with "a wife and babies, two canary birds, a greyhound and an Italian boy-in-buttons." In his trunk he had the manuscript of "Maggio

¹William Mason: *Memories of a Musical Life*. New York, 1901.

²Curiously enough, Paderewski a little later, paid him the identical compliment, a rather embarrassing coincidence.

in Toscana," the result of his two years' stay in Italy. Considering his thirty-five years he had about as much fame as an American composer could expect, as is indicated by the fact that he was met by reporters at the pier.

He had still the boyish face, bright with enthusiasm. Above the young face and blue eyes was a mass of dark hair thickly sown with white. He was slim, graceful in every shift of his flexible body, but his nerves—even as when he was a little child—were keyed to a pitch of almost painful intensity.¹

Whether Nevin is really entitled to the fame he had acquired it is not my purpose to determine. There is a disposition to disparage his talent, because of his—it must be admitted—rather slender accomplishments. Had he had more "solid" knowledge, more discipline, more sturdy qualities added to his poetic nature, he might indeed have been the American Chopin. As it is, he has managed to appeal with his music to a larger number of Americans than any other native composer worthy of the name. This is due, it will hardly be disputed, to the fact that he had a gift for melody equalled only by Foster and MacDowell among American composers, and this alone entitles him to a place among his companions.

Just two years after MacDowell's concert in Madison Square Concert-Hall, in 1897, Nevin gave his in the same place. New York must have begun to think that perhaps the American composer is not a myth after all. The program included a large number of songs and piano pieces. To clinch his success the composer gave two more concerts during the season, at Carnegie Lyceum (in the basement of Carnegie Hall), at one of which "The Rosary" was first sung in New York.

This most popular of Nevin's songs, and perhaps the most popular of all American songs—folk-songs excepted—was written during that season in New York. Its birthplace was Nevin's apartment, with his studio in Carnegie Hall sharing the honor to some extent. We therefore add the house at 221 West Fifty-seventh Street to our landmarks, without an apology. The story as told by Mr. Thompson is simple enough.²

One evening [in January, 1898] he sat with his wife, reading the day's letters. In one of them—a letter from one of his childhood friends, Miss Elizabeth Dickson of Sewickley—was a clipping from a magazine, on which was printed Robert Cameron Rogers' short poem. It needed no second reading for Nevin to recognize its lyric beauty. In a few

¹Vance Thompson: *The Life of Ethelbert Nevin*. Boston, 1913.

²Op. cit.

minutes he had it by heart, and he walked up and down the room, repeating [the verses].

The next afternoon he came home from his studio. He handed his wife a pencilled manuscript of a song with this note: 'Just a little souvenir to let you know that I thank the *bon Dieu* for giving me you. The entire love and devotion of Ethelbert Nevin.'

That was a way of his; many of his compositions he presented to his wife—always with a few written words. Few richer gifts were ever so lightly given. Then he sat down at the piano in the winter twilight and sang the song for her, 'The Rosary.' It was not published until many months later.¹

Nevin did not remain in New York long after this, and he returned to the city only for fleeting visits. In 1900 he made his winter home in New Haven, Conn., and on the following February 20th he died there. His summer home was his birthplace, "Vine-acre," near Pittsburgh, and there he was buried. His body was taken to its resting place over the same route as Foster's thirty-seven years before.

For the sake of completeness two of our earliest composers, already mentioned, should be remembered here.² They are William Henry Fry and George F. Bristow. Fry was a native of Philadelphia (1815) but he came to New York in 1851, as music critic of the *Tribune*, and spent virtually his remaining years here. Bristow was born and died in the city. For neither of these men can anything but a record for pioneer work be claimed. Genius they had not and to trace their footsteps would be straining the patience of the reader. Let us only remember that Fry was the first American to produce an opera, "Leonora," which he did first in Philadelphia (1845), then in New York, the second time in Italian at the Academy (1858). Bristow had even less real inspiration; he was a good pianist, violinist and teacher, and

¹In 1898! The details of the transaction with an amusing exchange of pleasantry between the brothers Gustave and Rudolph E. Schirmer—the whim of a moment involving the passing of a fortune from one man's pocket into the other's—are just as romantic as the origin of this "biggest of sellers" but are not ripe for publication.—*Ed.*

²As also the oddest figure in American musical history: Anton Philipp Heinrich. Born a millionaire in Bohemia in 1781, he died in extreme poverty in New York in 1861 after a weird and fantastic career. It has been for years a plan of mine to write a biography of this composer who was known in America as "Father Heinrich" and whom his admirers dubbed the "Beethoven of America," thereby rather insulting Beethoven and even lesser lights. The "Berlioz of America" would have been more appropriate, since Heinrich in his innumerable symphonic poems, etc., consistently employed an orchestra of almost *fin de siècle* proportions, though with a background of ideas that suggest the influence of a Pleyel. For the time being, the reader may be referred to the brief article on this eccentric pseudo-genius in Baker-Remy's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians. It is characteristic of our incomplete knowledge of the history of music in America that the name of "Father Heinrich," easily the most commanding figure as a composer in America before 1860 and perhaps the first symphonic composer to utilize Indian themes and to display, however naively, nationalistic "American" tendencies, is not even mentioned in the histories of American music.—*Ed.*

wrote much music of serious character—symphonies and operas included—which was remarkable at that time in America (he was born in 1825). His “Rip van Winkle” was given at Niblo’s by the Payne and Harrison Opera Company, September 27th, 1855, “The music,” says R. O. Mason,¹ “was bright and taking, though not always in perfect keeping with the quaint old-time subject, and the orchestration was excellent.” It was about the dawn of American music.

DVOŘÁK AND SEIDL IN NEW YORK

A composer who, though not American, has given his work a permanent American connotation, is Antonin Dvořák. In the heyday of his fame he made New York his home for three years. His influence is all out of proportion with the shortness of his stay, and he is held in affectionate memory by many as one of our own.

Dvořák came on the invitation of the National Conservatory to become its director in the fall of 1892. He left in the spring of 1895. In the interim he taught many aspiring American composers, gave valuable encouragement to those who had talent, and—most important—he directed attention to the profound value of the Negro folk-song as a national musical asset, pointing the finger of authority to the extraordinary musical gifts of the Negro race. For our present purpose it is significant that Dvořák is the first non-American composer who has done creative work of a high order here. New York may indeed point with pride to the house in East Seventeenth Street, No. 337, fronting on Stuyvesant Park, where the “New World” Symphony, the “American” Quartet, opus 96, and the Quintet, opus 95—immortal works all—were written. On December 16th, 1893, Anton Seidl produced the symphony for the first time anywhere, with the Philharmonic Society in Carnegie Hall, in the composer’s presence, and to this day no modern symphonic work is more popular with the American public.

Dvořák’s teaching was done in the old houses formerly occupied by the Conservatory, at 126–128 East Seventeenth Street, near Irving Place. (The site is now occupied by Washington Irving High School). Walking back and forth between his home and the school, “Pan Antonin of the sturdy little figure, the jovial smile, the kindly heart and the school-girl modesty” became a familiar sight to his neighbors. His modesty—almost humility—was most touching at times. Harvey Worthington Loomis,

¹Op. cit.

probably his favorite American pupil, who lived nearby, tells of finding him one day walking up and down in front of his (Loomis's) lodgings. Expressing surprise at seeing the master waste his time in this fashion he asked why he didn't have himself announced. "Oh well, I didn't want to disturb you, if you were busy," Dvořák replied, "but I thought that perhaps if I walked up and down for a while you might come out." And so they walked and talked, as they did for many a pleasant hour, on New York's streets. Loomis tells, too, of how Dvořák would embrace him effusively, and fairly dance with joy when the pupil had done good work. And how he made himself a bug-a-boo to another student, whose work he did not like—making believe to attack him with a gruff "boo-oo-oo!" Child-like simplicity is often the attribute of the great artist. Dvořák had much to teach us. Let us keep his memory green.

It is not possible, within the limits of this article, to trace the movements of all the great musicians who have visited New York or have made it their temporary home. But a man like Anton Seidl, whose stay was so long and whose influence so deep, cannot be left out of our account. Seidl's work in America is well known: his great pioneer task in staging Wagner's dramas at the Metropolitan, his splendid leadership of the Philharmonic Society, his popularizing of good music with his own orchestra at Manhattan Beach and elsewhere. He came in 1885, conducted at the Opera House until 1891 and again from 1895 to 1897 under very trying circumstances. In the interim he conducted the Philharmonic Society, and also popular concerts with his own "Metropolitan" Orchestra in Brooklyn, Brighton Beach and Lenox Lyceum, New York.¹

While in New York, Seidl and his wife, Frau Auguste Seidl-Krauss, a fine singer, lived at No. 38 East Sixty-second Street. But the spot especially associated with Seidl, aside from the Metropolitan and Carnegie Hall, is the corner of Broadway and Tenth Street, now a part of Grace Church yard, but then occupied by Fleischmann's Café, with a little "garden" out front, where inviting bay-trees and awnings beckoned to the passerby. Here Seidl used to sit of an afternoon and sip his coffee. On the afternoon of November 28th, 1898, he went there as usual, promising his wife to return for dinner, but he did not return. Being seized with an acute stomach ailment, he was taken to his manager's

¹During the summer of 1898 he went to Europe and conducted in Grau's season at Covent Garden. He returned exhausted from overwork, but nevertheless went ahead with preparations for the season 1898-99.

house, at 312 East Nineteenth Street, where he died before the summoned help could arrive. His body was cremated, after an imposing public funeral service in the Metropolitan Opera House.

It is the irony of fate that his dream of an endowed orchestra was about to come true. His friends were, at that very moment, at work upon plans for such an organization. His work, unfinished as it was (he was forty-eight years old), will not soon be forgotten by New Yorkers.

ALONG THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF MUSICAL NEW YORK

There are scores of musical landmarks that we cannot stop to mention. There are churches, like Trinity, which housed the first organ in New York, and which, under the guidance of New York's great pioneer church musician, William Tuckey, became, as early as 1754, one of the leading musical churches of America; or like old St. John's, long famous for its boy choir; or Grace, formerly a neighbor of Trinity, where Malibran sang in 1826; or St. George's, which as St. George's Chapel, was located at the corner of Beekman (then Chapel) and Nassau (then Cliff) Streets, and in which the first concert of the New York Choral Society took place on April 20th, 1824. In its present building, on Stuyvesant Square, the funeral service of Edward MacDowell was held, as already stated. There are old club-houses, like the old Arion, at 19-21 St. Mark's Place, where Leopold Damrosch began his activities in 1871, and Carl Bergmann before him in 1854; or the old Mendelssohn Glee Club, now the home of the MacDowell Club, at 108 West Fifty-fifth Street, which was the workshop of Joseph Mosenthal, the pupil of Spohr who was the club's founder in 1866. The reception to Hans von Bülow in 1880 was one of many notable events that have taken place in the club-house.

And there are hotels. Almost every old hotel in New York is a landmark for having given shelter to great musicians.

Thus the old Astor House, till recent years a venerable neighbor of the more venerable St. Paul's, on lower Broadway, was the stopping place of Ole Bull as early as 1843. The Irving Hotel, formerly at the corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, was Jenny Lind's first home during her historic visit of 1850.¹

¹Her coming occasioned a sort of public holiday. An eye-witness, records that when the diva arrived, on Sunday, September 1st, crowds had gathered at the pier and at the hotel. Like a sovereign receiving the homage of loyal subjects she had to appear at the window and bow to the shouting multitude below. After eleven o'clock at night some 200 members of the Musical Fund Society, under George Loder, escorted by twenty companies of firemen, bearing torches, serenaded her. Jenny Lind's answer was the prize song, "Greeting to America," written by Bayard Taylor and set to music by Julius Benedict, the conductor of her tour.

Then there are the New York Hotel, at 721 Broadway to which Jenny Lind removed soon after and which accommodated many of the visiting artists of that period, and the Metropolitan Hotel, at the corner of Prince Street, where Mario and Grisi lived, while singing at the Academy of Music. Mario was an extraordinarily handsome man, and his feminine admirers, despite the watchful eye of his devoted but jealous spouse, would shower attentions on him. There is a story of a mysterious wealthy lady, who sat alone in a stage box every night that Mario sang, and drove Grisi, who watched her from behind the scenes, almost to distraction. While Mario was indisposed she used to call at the Metropolitan Hotel every evening in her carriage to inquire after his health. When the waiter brought her favorable news she would reward the lucky messenger with a Double-eagle. Eventually she followed the couple to St. Petersburg, as she had followed them from England. A more pathetic case of long-distance infatuation has hardly ever been known.¹

At the Hotel Belvedere, at Fourteenth Street and Fourth Avenue, many of the stars of the Academy of Music stopped, and Emily Soldene, the comic opera star, coming here in 1874, records as a good omen her occupying by coincidence the room formerly used by Mme. Parepa-Rosa. In the Fifth Avenue Hotel, which only recently gave way to the Fifth Avenue Building, at Twenty-third Street, Offenbach stayed during his visit to America in 1875. Further uptown, at Thirtieth Street and Broadway is the Hotel Normandie, where Tchaikovsky was domiciled in 1892. His diary of April 27th is too amusing to pass over. After he was left alone by the friends who conducted him, he "began to walk up and down the room and shed many tears" (of homesickness). Later he strolled on Broadway. Here is his comment:

An extraordinary street! Houses of one and two stories alternate with some nine-story buildings. Most original. I was struck with the number of nigger faces I saw. When I got back I began crying again, and slept like the dead, as I always do after tears. I awoke refreshed, but the tears are always in my eyes.

Most of the hotels still further uptown have musical associations. The Knickerbocker, long Caruso's home, the Waldorf, the Astor and Rector's, have all been used by Metropolitan stars. The Wellington, on Seventh Avenue, near Fifty-fifth Street, is now, more than ever, a musicians' home. Mahler stopped at the Majestic and the Savoy. The quest is endless.

¹Luigi Arditi: *Memoirs*. New York, 1908.

And finally there are certain nooks and corners of the city which have associations of a sort not easily classified. On Pearl Street, in the short block between State and Whitehall Streets, near the Battery, is the site of the house in which John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home" was born. Payne as a boy was a stage prodigy. He went to Europe as an actor, and in London was jailed for debt. In jail he wrote some plays, which he sent to Charles Kemble, the actor. Among them was "Clari, the Maid of Milan," in which the verses of "Home, Sweet Home" occur, and which was set as an opera by Sir Henry Bishop.¹

At No. 107 Fulton Street, near Park Row, is the site of the school house where Ray Palmer taught when he composed "My Faith Looks Up to Thee." On Park Row itself there was, in the forties, the Shakespeare Restaurant, which was a favorite haunt of musicians and in which the idea of founding the Philharmonic Society was first suggested.² It was after the "Musical Solemnity" of 1839, and a number of the participants, including Messrs. Hill, Horn, Boucher and Reiff, elated over the success of the concert, foregathered there for refreshment and mutual congratulation. U. C. Hill is said to have been the first to propose the "organization of a permanent society from the best orchestral performers" to produce and develop a taste for the symphonic classics. A meeting at Hill's house was arranged for on the spot, and this led to the actual organization of the orchestra at the Apollo Saloon. Another incident in the history of the Philharmonic Society is connected with the northeast corner of Nineteenth Street and Fourth Avenue. This was the home of Professor R. Ogden Doremus, the society's president in 1870, when Christine Nilsson came to New York. That open-air serenading was then still a pleasant survival of the days of chivalry appears from the story of the reception given to the diva told by Richard Hoffman in his "Recollections."³ According to this the house stood far back from the street and had a garden in front. Here the orchestra stationed itself and played. Nilsson acknowledged the compliment and charmed everyone by her gracious manner. "She was tall and graceful," says Hoffman, "with an abundance of blonde hair, made more striking by the dark eyebrows and deep-set gray eyes."

Such serenades were even at this late day not uncommon. Indeed, it was thought the proper thing for a man to engage the

¹The most universal of all household songs is in reality not a folk-song. Bishop, who set the music to it, tried to pass it off as a "Neapolitan folk-song" and it was long accepted as such.

²R. Osgood Mason: op. cit., p. 70.

³p. 142 et seq.

best brass band he could afford, and with it after midnight proceed to the house of the lady of his choice and stand beneath her windows, "while the musicians played the most sentimental and amorous selections." Night watchmen, we are assured, lent an indulgent ear to these revellers, "who would doubtless be locked up as disturbers of the peace under our modern régime."

The founding of another old society, the Church Music Association, was consummated at the home of George T. Strong, Esq., at 113 Gramercy Park in 1868-69. The organization meeting and the first rehearsals of its successor, the present Oratorio Society, were held in the Knabe Warerooms, at 112 Fifth Avenue in 1873.

Not far from this spot stands the house which saw the culmination of a famous romance. Here Lilli Lehmann and Paul Kalisch, the tenor, were clandestinely married, on February 24th, 1888. This famous love affair had started in Europe, and Mme. Lehmann had paved the way for Kalisch's coming—had even secured engagements for him in advance. Immediately upon his arrival the pair went to "the ever-jovial Consul-General Feigl's" house at 24 West Twenty-second Street, where the civil ceremony was performed. A religious ceremony followed at Pastor Krüsi's little Protestant church, while the Krüsi family sang a chorale which touched the bridal couple deeply. New York did not hear of the affair until several days later and was, of course, much excited over it.¹

At 37 East Sixty-eighth Street is the house in which Xaver Scharwenka conducted his Conservatory while in America, from 1891 to 1898. We shall not pursue this enumeration further, though a fine-tooth combing of the city would disclose many more points of musical interest.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF DIXIE

But there is one more site out of the many that remain which cries out for notice. It corresponds with No. 472 Broadway, near Grand Street, and was formerly occupied by Mechanics' Hall.² This was the birthplace of "Dixie," our second national hymn. The story of its birth easily bears repeating, as told in

¹Lilli Lehmann: "My Path through Life," transl. by Alice B. Seligman. New York, 1914.

²I have already mentioned this as the place where "Old Folks at Home" was first sung.

his diary by Charley White,¹ one of Bryant's Minstrels, who were performing at Mechanics' Hall just before the Civil War:

One Saturday night in 1859, when Dan Emmett was a member of Bryant's Minstrels at Mechanics' Hall, New York, Dan [Bryant] said to Emmett: 'Can't you get us up a walk-around dance? I want something new and lively for next Monday night.' At that date, and for a long time after, minstrel shows used to finish up the evening performance with a walk-around dance, in which the whole company would participate. The demand for this especial material was constant, and Dan Emmett was the principal composer of all, especially for the Bryant Minstrels. Emmett, of course, went to work and, as he had done so much in that line of composition, he was not long in finding something suitable. At last he hit upon the first two bars, and any composer can tell you how good a start that is in the manufacture of a melody. The next day, Sunday, he had the words commencing 'I wish I was in Dixie.' This colloquial expression is not, as most people suppose, a southern phrase, but first appeared among the circus men in the North. In the early fall, when nipping frost would overtake the tented wanderers, the boys would think of the genial warmth of the section they were heading for, and the common expression would be, 'Well, I wish I was in Dixie.' This gave the title or catch line. The rest of the song was original. On Monday morning the song was rehearsed and highly recommended, and at night, as usual, the house was crowded, and many of the auditors went home singing 'Dixie.'

I end this study with the recommendation to any one of our patriotic societies to mark the spot with a tablet.

¹Extracts published in the *New York Sun*, April 20, 1902.